

null
Diana T Fritz 06/05/2007 04:24:32 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

Cable
Text:

UNCLASSIFIED

SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

January 05, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 25 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: PREL, KPAO
Captions: None
Subject: UAE MINISTER OF INFORMATION GIVES GREEN LIGHT FOR MIDDLE EAST TELEVISION NETWORK
Ref: None

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 00025

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: PAO
INFO: POL DCM ECON AMB
Laser1:
ACTION: PAO

DISSEMINATION: PAO
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MWAHBA
DRAFTED: PAO:KVANDEVATE
Cleared: ADCM:TWILLIAMS

VZCZCADI331
OO RUEHC RUEHZM RUEHEG RUEHAM
DE RUEHAD #0025 0051036
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 051036Z JAN 03
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7704
INFO RUEHZM/GCC COLLECTIVE
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0014
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0417

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 000025

SIPDIS

FOR BBG GOVERNOR NORM PATTIZ FROM AMBASSADOR MARCELLE WAHBA; BBG INFO GTHATCHER, SGANDJI

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/PPD DMACINNES, ACASPER, JDAVIES

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: BBG PREL KPAO TC
SUBJECT: UAE MINISTER OF INFORMATION GIVES GREEN LIGHT FOR MIDDLE EAST TELEVISION NETWORK

¶1. SUMMARY: I CALLED ON UAE MININFO AND PRESIDENTIAL SON SHAYKH ABDULLAH BIN ZAYED ON DECEMBER 30 TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED MIDDLE EAST TELEVISION NETWORK (METN). THE MINISTER WELCOMED BOTH THE IDEA OF THE NEW STATION AND THE PROSPECT OF LOCATING IT IN THE UAE, ESPECIALLY IN ABU DHABI. SHOULD THE UAE BE THE SITE CHOSEN BY THE BBG, MY MISSION AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH YOUR TEAM TO BRING THIS PROJECT TO FRUITION. WE

AWAIT A DETAILED PROPOSAL IN ORDER TO ASSIST YOU AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY

¶12. FURTHER TO EXPLORATORY SITE VISITS TO THE UAE BY IBB STAFF, I CALLED ON UAE MININFO SHAYKH ABDULLAH DECEMBER 30 TO EXPLAIN THE CONCEPT OF THE METN AND GAUGE HIS REACTION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF LOCATING IT IN ABU DHABI OR DUBAI. THE MINISTER INDICATED THAT HE HAD BEEN WELL-BRIEFED ON THE EARLIER VISITS BY AHMAD BLOUSHI, HEAD OF EMIRATES MEDIA INC. (EMI). HE ASKED WHAT SORT OF PROGRAMMING THE NETWORK WOULD BROADCAST. I EXPLAINED THAT THE PLAN FOR THE METN WAS STILL IN ITS FORMATIVE STAGES BUT THAT IT ENVISONS A MIXTURE OF SIXTY PERCENT NEWS, FORTY PERCENT FEATURES IN AN ALL-ARABIC SEVEN-DAY, 24-HOUR FORMAT.

"WE ARE PROUD TO BE A PART OF IT:" MINISTER WELCOMES TV PROPOSAL

¶13. THE MINISTER WELCOMED THE IDEA ENTHUSIASTICALLY, NOTING THAT THE NEWS OPERATION OF EMIRATES MEDIA WOULD SOON BE VACATING ITS OLD STUDIOS IN ABU DHABI, LEAVING THEM AVAILABLE FOR A NEW TENANT. HE ADDED THAT IN FOUR YEARS, THE EMI TELEVISION OPERATION WOULD MOVE TO NEW PREMISES IN ABU DHABI, LEAVING ITS ENTIRE SITE, WITH SIX TELEVISION STUDIOS, FREE. HE ALSO MENTIONED THAT EMI HAS PREMISES IN DUBAI MEDIA CITY WHICH BBG COULD USE IN THE FUTURE IF THEY WANT TO BUILD A FACILITY THERE. WHEN I ASKED HIM IF THE UAEG WOULD BE "COMFORTABLE" WITH THE IDEA OF HOSTING SUCH A STATION AND WITH ITS POLITICAL OVERTONES, HE REPLIED UNHESITATINGLY: "YES, OF COURSE. WE ARE NOT LOOKING FOR THE FINANCIAL ELEMENT. I AM LOOKING FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO ENTITIES. WE WILL BOTH BENEFIT." HE ADDED: "WE FEEL PROUD TO BE PART OF THIS. THIS IS NOT A THING WE WANT TO DO BEHIND THE SCENES; WE WANT IT TO BE PUBLIC."

¶14. FOR MY PART, I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE HAVE THE UAEG'S POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED TV NETWORK. SHOULD THE UAE BE THE SITE CHOSEN BY THE BBG, MY MISSION AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH YOUR TEAM TO BRING THIS PROJECT TO FRUITION. WE AWAIT A DETAILED PROPOSAL IN ORDER TO ASSIST YOU AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE. WITH BEST REGARDS. MARCELLE WAHBA

WAHBA